AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1-21 (Canceled)

1 22. (Currently amended) A process for producing carboxylic acids by oxidation of a hydrocarbon with oxygen or a gas containing oxygen with the formation of esters in a reaction medium, in the presence of a monocarboxylic acid-based solvent and of an oxidation catalyst, comprising the steps of hydrolysing the esters formed as byproducts by carrying out a treatment of the reaction medium before extraction of the carboxylic acids or a treatment of the organic phase derived from the reaction medium after extraction of the carboxylic acids formed, wherein said hydrolysis is carried out by addition of a strong acid to the medium to be treated.

2 23. (Currently amended) A process according to Claim 1 22, wherein the ~~hydrolysis step is carried out by addition to the medium to be treated of a strong acid and maintenance of said~~ medium is maintained at a temperature of greater than 50°C, optionally of between 80°C and 200°C.

3 24. (Currently amended) A process according to Claim 1 22 ~~23~~, wherein the strong acid has a pKa of less than or equal to 2.

4 25. (Previously presented) A process according to Claim 3 24, wherein the strong acid is carried on or attached to an inert material such as a resin.

5 ~~26.~~ (Previously presented) A process according to claim ~~25~~ 4, wherein the resin is a sulphonic acid resin.

6 ~~27.~~ (Previously presented) A process according to claim ~~22~~ 1, wherein the extraction of the carboxylic acids produced from the reaction medium is carried out by means of separation by settling out.

7 ~~28.~~ (Previously presented) A process according to claim ~~22~~ 1, wherein the extraction of the carboxylic acids produced from the reaction medium is obtained by liquid/liquid extraction.

8 ~~29.~~ (Previously presented) A process according to claim ~~22~~ 1, wherein the organic phase obtained after extraction of the carboxylic acids and hydrolysis of the esters is recycled at the oxidation step.

9 ~~30.~~ (Previously presented) A process according to claim ~~22~~ 1, wherein the organic phase recovered after separation of the diacids formed is subjected to distillation of the compounds having a boiling point less than or equal to that of the alcohol formed during the oxidation step, before the hydrolysis step.

10 ~~31.~~ (Previously presented) A process according to claim ~~22~~ 1, wherein the organic phase recovered after separation of the diacids formed is subjected to distillation of the compounds having a boiling point less than or equal to that of the acid solvent used in the oxidation step, before the hydrolysis step.

11 ~~32.~~ (Previously presented) A process according to claim ~~22~~ 1, wherein the acids formed during the hydrolysis step are extracted from the medium with a solvent for said acids.

12 ~~33.~~ (Previously presented) A process according to claim ~~32~~ 11, wherein the oxidation solvent present in the hydrolysis medium is extracted and purified before recycling at the oxidation step.

13 ~~34.~~ (Previously presented) A process according to claim ~~32~~ 11, wherein the acids recovered from the hydrolysis medium are mixed with the diacids extracted from the oxidation medium or in the oxidation medium before extraction of the diacids.

14 ~~35.~~ (Previously presented) A process according to claim ~~22~~ 1, wherein the hydrocarbon is a cycloalkane.

15 ~~36.~~ (Previously presented) A process according to claim ~~35~~ 14, wherein the cycloalkane is cyclohexane or cyclododecane.

16 ~~37.~~ (Previously presented) A process according to claim ~~22~~ 1, wherein the solvent is a monocarboxylic acid having from 1 to 6 carbon atoms, or an acid lipophilic in nature, having from 7 to 20 carbon atoms.

17 ~~38.~~ (Previously presented) A process according to claim ~~37~~ 16, wherein the lipophilic acid is hexanoic acid, heptanoic acid, octanoic acid, 2-ethylhexanoic acid, nonanoic acid, decanoic acid, undecanoic acid, dodecanoic acid, stearic acid (octadecanoic acid) and their permethylated derivatives, 2-octadecylsuccinic acid, 3,5-ditert-butylbenzoic acid, 4-tert-butylbenzoic acid, 4-octylbenzoic acid, tert-butyl hydrogen orthophthalate, alkylnaphthenic acid, alkylanthracenic acid, a substituted derivative of phthalic acids, or a fatty diacid.

18 ~~39.~~ (Previously presented) A process according to claim ~~38~~ 17, wherein the lipophilic

acid is a dimer fatty acid, a naphthenic acid substituted with tert-butyl groups, or an anthracenic acid substituted with tert-butyl groups.

19 ~~40.~~ (Previously presented) A process according to claim ~~22~~ 1, wherein the catalyst is a transition metal.

20 ~~41.~~ (Previously presented) A process according to claim ~~40~~ 19, wherein the catalyst is based on manganese in combination with a co-catalyst which is cobalt, zirconium, cerium, hafnium or iron.

21 ~~42.~~ (Previously presented) A process according to claim ~~22~~ 1, wherein the polycarboxylic acid produced is adipic acid, succinic acid, glutaric acid, dodecanedioic acid or a mixture thereof.